Thunder Haile, & Lightni

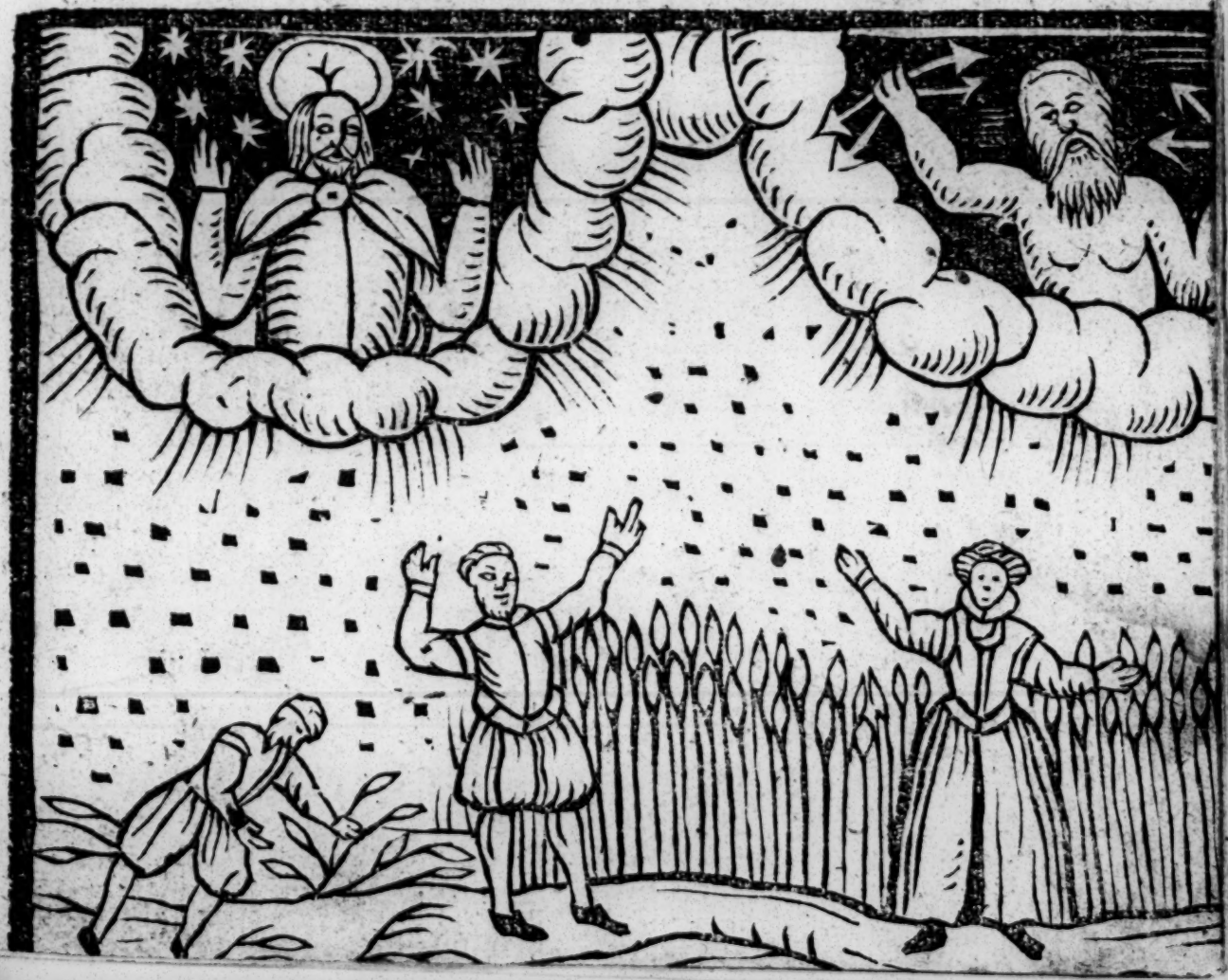
S W H Ireland Jun.

from Heauen.

Sent against certaine Couetous persons, inhabitants of Humerstone colneshire, 5. miles from Grimsby: Thought to be a iust punishn *from God, in the behalfe of the Poore, the 3. of Iuly last, 1610.*

How their Corne was destroyed: the like neuer heard of in an Onely one Mans estate preserued, who gaue them Releife. As it *iustified before the Knights and Iustices of that County at the Quarter* Sessions holden at Lowth: the tenth day of Iuly.

With the Lamentable end of *Iohn Cormish* his Wife and two child *who were most strangly confounded in one day, at Strow in Staffor sheire the ninth of May. 1616.*



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Newes out of Lincolne-ſhire,
OR
Thunder, Lightning, and Haile *from Heauen.*

Sent againſt certaine couetous perſons, Inhabitants of Humerſtone in Liecolne-ſhire, 5. miles from Grimesby: Thought to be a iuſt puniſhment from *God, in the behalfe of the Poore. The* 3. *of* Iuly *laſt.* 1616.

THAT Reuerend, Learned, and euer to be prayſed Saint of God, Father Latimer, ſometimes Biſhop of Worceſter, comming to preach before that King of famous memory Edward the firſt, tooke for his Text, theſe words, Take heed and beware of Couetouſnes; and this, with a loud voyce, hee declared ſix ſeuerall times together without interpoſition of any other ſentence betweene, to the much amazement of his Auditory: but in the end he ſhewed them that thoſe very words were a ſufficient Sermon for thoſe times, and deſerued not an howerly, but an endles repetition. Oh, what would that good man ſay now in

these iron dayes of oures! wherein this sinne of Couetousnes (which ought to be as odious vnto vs, as the saluation of our soules acceptable) rayneth and rageth like a fiend, Gyant, or a young Lyon, ready to begin his course: would he not then tell vs that the couetous man is the trewe foolish man, the desperate man, the most poore man, one that wants as well that which he hath, as that which he hath not: [that liues in an eternall affliction presenting all men yet tormenting himselfe aboue all men. All sinnes are begun in pride, for there wee first turne from God: but all sinnes are rooted and sprung from couetousnes, for by it wée tourne too much to the creatures, and as a learned father saith, Riches cause sweat in the getting of them, they cause feare in the possessing of them, they bring forth griefe in the loosing of them, and which is worse, The labour of the couetous is not onely perishing, but killing, either thy riches doe forsake thee, or thou them.

If then miserable man will haue no hope but his wealth, what will the wealth of that hope be when the soule and body shall be deuided asunder: how is it possible that a couetous man should trust God with his soule, that will not trust him with his body? God, like the true father of the best family, takes care for all his children, why should then the couetous man doubt least he cannot sustayne him? he that is most wise, applyeth his wisdome to relieue vs; why should the couetous man doubt the meanes how? hée that is most bountifull opens a liberall hand vnto vs, why should the couetous man make question of his willingnes? O thou which art more stupid then the rockes (for they shake at his power) remember thou hast the word of his most blessed Sonne, our Sauiour, which is the maister of all in heauen and earth, that nothinge of those thinges which are needfull for man shall be wanting to them which séeke the kingdome of God, relie then on his promise for he is all truth, and truth will neuer deceiue thee.

What shall wee thinke of couetousnes, or what shall we

say

say it is, why it is the very fame or topmaſt of all Idolatry, ſetting the creatures in the place of their Creator, and tranſporting all confidence that is due to God, to earthly thinges, vild, baſe, and corruptable, and what is loued more then God is eſteemed before God, and whatſoeuer houldeth that eſtimation muſt neceſſarily recide in the heart, which is the place of God. Eſau ſould his birth right for pottage, how many Eſaus now ſell the inheritance of heauen it ſelfe, a place purchaſed for vs by the bloud of our bleſſed Sauiour, onely for the gaine of a little temporall riches, though as as vayne as the world and as vncertayne as the pleaſures thereof, Iudas ſould Chriſt for ſiluer, the couetous man ſells the grace of Chriſt for earth, how can any man aſpyre to the kingdome of heauen, that hath his ſoule neald to his bagges, and his heart full of the huskes of Hogges: how can he lift vp his ſpirits to Godward, whoſe onely ſtudy is to finde the reſt of his ſoule in the wealth of his reuenewes, or high raiſ'd Towers of his ſumptuous buildinges. O call to minde what the word of truth ſaith, that riches are thornes, he therefore that loueth ritches loueth thornes, which thornes wound the ſoule, choake the ſoule, kill the ſoule: And as thornes doe hinder the increaſe of the ſeede, ſo the ouer-much care of riches doth hinder the ſpirituall fount of the word, thornes afflict the body with prickings, ſo riches doe vexe the ſoule with ſharpe cares, yea cares, that gnawing vppon the ſoule, bring forth ſorrowe, ſorrow deſperation, and deſperation bringeth forth eternall deſtruction.

Beleeue it thou couetous man thou ſhalt periſh if thou gather onely periſhing things, the treaſures which ruſt and mothes doe corrupt, for they that gather together treaſures in the earth, are like them which hoord vp corne in moyſte places, not remembring how ſoone it will rotte and come to putrifaction, of all follies none is more ſtrong then the planting the mayne end and ſcope of our deſires in the riches of this world, for how can a bodily thing fill or adorne

borne the soule which is a spirit, when rather the spirituall nature by his owne vertue doth so comprehend corporall things that it is stretched forth by no quantity: The soule is created to eternity, what infinittes of wrongs dost thou doe vnto her if thou place the end of all her best desires in things fading, vaine and momentary, for who knowes not that the soule by how much the more it is lifted vp vnto GOD, by so much the more it is withdrawne from the loue of riches, nay all things in the world, by how much they are neerer heauenly things, by so much they desire lesse and gather togather fewer things: The Birds of the ayre, the Lillies of the fielde, they neither sow nor reape, yet Salomon their inferior, and yet the Pice and creeping things doe heape together in their Caues, which shewes them of much worse and vilder condition and of a farre more ignoble name then the other, and truely it is the truest carracter of the soules heauenly meditation, when she least esteemes and contemneth these perishing earthly commodities, for when she is turned away from God, then is she fastned and fettred to riches and then do all inordinate lusts and desires raygne ouer her like a Tyrant making her commit any sinne how hatefull soeuer, then it is that fleshly man forgetteth how God hath giuen him a soule, so that hee dare not trust him with his vilde carkasse, hee then beholds not how that GOD doth feede all liuing creatures whose eyes doe lookvp and trust in him, & therfore miserably doubts whether hee will sustayne him yea or no, whom he hath created euen to his owne Image, poore miserable man let it shame thee that fayth and reason cannot worke that in thy soule and conscience, which naturall instinct doth worke euen in the most braite and sauadge creatures, O how infinit is the desidence and distrust of the couetous man, for he will not giue credit to the word of GOD before hee haue prouided those corruptible helpes which euen famish and starue him in the greatnes and greedines of his plenty.

The couetous man, of all men is the most vniust, and

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the moſt deceiuing, and why? becauſe he brought nothing into the world, with him, and yet is ſo grædily carefull of worldly ritches, as if he ſhould beare away caſtles, towers, and treaſury, nay the very mines of the earth out of the world with him, againe he is of all men the moſt vnthankfull, and ingratefull, and why? becauſe he inioyeth much of Gods goods, and a world of his bleſſings, and yet is neuer carryed vp with a confidence in his heart to be thankfull, to the giuer of thoſe good thinges, or to diſtribute them by an honeſt ſcale, to the poore indigent and nædfull Creatures; laſtly hee is moſt fooliſh and ſottiſh, becauſe hee leaueth the true good, without which nothing is truely good, and cleaues vnto that which without the grace of God is not good: ſo that I may ſay with a learned father. Hee that is intangled with the loue of earthly thinges, doth not poſſeſſe them, but is poſſeſſed of them. Why thy Couetouſnes is neither extinguiſht by ſuperfluity nor ſcarcity, not by the latter becauſe the deſire of hauing doth increaſe when it cannot be obtained which is long deſired, nor by the former becauſe the couetous perſon by how much the more hee gets, by ſo much the more he ſeekes, nay when he hath gotten and poſſeſſeth that which was deſired of couetouſnes, there is euen at the ſame inſtant withall adminiſtred, as it were vnder hand, a new matter of deſiring, and ſo like the violence of a waſting fire, when it hath taken the wood and matter that it conſumes, it increaſeth: Couetouſnes is a Brooke or ſmall Riuellet, little at the beginning, but afterwards when other currents of ſinne fall into it, it increaſeth, without bound, without without meaſure: ſet then (O worldly man) limits to thy deſires of wealth, leaſt that vnſatiſfied deſire draw thee to a neuer ſatiſfied deſtruction: for it is moſt certaine that many men doe deuoure in this life that wich afterwards they diſieſt in Hell: and many from their thirſt of gaine, drinke riuers of perpetuall perdition. Now if theſe meditations cannot enter thy ſoule, but that thy hard heart, like a Bulwarke of earth withſtand all battery: O then bend thine eyes vpon

the indgement of God & look into the examples in times past and times present; inuuagine thou seest Sodome and Gomorrah euen flaming before thee, Jerusalem walled and buried, in her cinders, the Tower of Siloam fall vpon the Israelites, thinke thou seest the ritch man crying from Hell for one drop of water to coole his tongue, Dauid weeping for his lust, whilst the pestilence raged ouer all his kingdome, the children of Iob banquetting till the ruines of the house fell vppon them; call to minde Lucifers fall for pride, Nabals end for periury, and Ahabs death for couetousnes, but if these long since commemorations be too weake to lift vp thy heauy soule, looke nearer to the dayes almost of thine owne remembrance, and then see how by winde and tempest not many yeares since, three hundred waight of lead was torne from the Abby of Westminster and fell vppon a young mans head who perished with the blow: and in the same tempest, how graues-end tilt boat with forty persons in it, & a Scottish ship laden with corne were both strangely torne in pieces, & not one liuing creature in them saued, also by the same storme was the farmer neere Sandwitch his vnthrift bought corne blowne all ouer the country, and the blaspheming Norfolke man, as he rid ouer a bridge, hoysted from thence and drowned in the riuer, Melborne in hampshire the same time had the steeple blowne downe and many houses and cattell perisht vnder it, and at Brissow diuers prophane drunkards comming from the ale were blowne into a dunghill pit, and there choakt and stifled in the filth of the same. But to come to somewhat more neerer times, remember how in a towne called Sutton, within the Ile of Elie in Cambridgeshire, in the yeare of our Lord 1594. there fell such outragious tempest of thunnder, lightening and raine continuing the space of fiue houres that no man nor beast was able to abide in the fields, but as if the last day had beene come, fled and besought the mountaines to couer them, and in this storme a flock of sheep the goods of one William Ores by violence of the lightening were all at one blow stricken dead, and not

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any liuing thing saued but a little boy that kept them, and one poore silly Lambe, also at the same time in Sussex there rose such floods of water, that iron Mills were borne away, and an infinite sort of men and cattell destroyed by the same. Also in Lincolneshire at the same time the thunder and lightning was so outragious, that birds flying in the ayre had their feathers burnt vppon their backes, and their bodies consumed, nay so violent was the terror thereof, that for two daies space not any liuing thing was seene to moue in the skye, and to this the Country of Orford was also a witnes, where the thunder and tempest was so great, that the day from the night was little or nothing at all discerned: But whither wander I in this discourse, since to repeate the iudgements of God or expresse his power, were to compile a worke infinite, let it suffice, we haue not onely heard with our eares, and our forefathers haue declared to vs the noble workes that God hath done in their dayes and in the old time before them, but wee haue also seene with our eyes O God thy most fearefull iudgements, able to melt the most flinty brest of the vildest liuer.

To come therefore to this present time, and compare Gods iudgements with the hatefull sinne of Couetousnes, you shall vnderstand that vppon the third of July last past 1616. being Wednesday, the poore people of the towne of Humerstone in Lincolneshire fiue miles from Grimsby a market towne in the same country, seeing the fruitfulnes of the yeare, and how seasonably euery time had conspired one with another to bring forth the increase of the earth in greater plenty then had beene seene many yeares before, in all peaceable and neighbourly manner made their petition to the rich Farmers of the same village being many in number, that they would be pleased to giue them leaue to gather pease or pescods from their lands as they had in former time done, and as it was almost a generall receiued custome ouer all the parts of this whole Kindome, but the rich Farmers, being men of hardened hearts, and such as not feeling want

would by no meanes know there was any want, with an ill setled resolution and some rough tearmes gaue the poore men a flat denialll of their sute, and adding therewith all, some menacing law threats, that if any of them durst attempt the gathering of a pease, how vndoingly costly they should finde it: the poore men with sad hearts and much affright at the bug-beares which lie hid vnder the law and contention, departed praying God to soften their hearts and to make them know that they were but stewards and must one day giue an account for these hidden talents which they thought to smother in the earth, and neither to doe good to themselues nor others, seeing that when the Lord of the store shall come, he will not be pleased with their vniust dealings: and as they were thus going to their owne houses, the poore men met with one Goodman Harrison a wealthy farmer of the same towne, yet nothing so rich in worldly wealth as in the treasure of much honesty and integrity of life, for hee was of all men esteemed for a godly, religious, and most vpright well dealing man, one whose heart was like his countenance euer cheerefull and free, seldome disposed to anger or sadnes, for his hate to wrongs made him seldome or neuer either doe or receiue iniuries, vertus defending him from the first and shame from the latter.

Now this goodman Harryson perceiuing the poore men returned in this heauy plight, did aske them the reason of their sad lookes and they knowing his goodnesse because they had often felt his goodnesse, boldly imparted vnto him what suit they had made to their rich neighbours, and how sternely and cruelly they were not onely denyed their reasonable request, but also with much threatning menaced if need should compell them, to vnplot their apointment. Now GOD forbid answered goodman Harryson, that we should deny our poore neighbours the gathering of a few peason, being a thing that euen custome, nature and the law of Charrity commaundeth at our hands, for why doth God giue vs the blessing of the earth, but that with them we

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should also bleſſe our poore brethren. Is it not ſaid thou ſhalt not muzell the mouth of the Ore, Horſe, or Aſſe, that treadeth out the corne, and ſhall I gagge or ſow vp the mouth of the poore that labour for me and my whole famille, it is not fit neighbours it is not fit, and at theſe words he deſired the poore men to tourne backe againe to his rich neighbours, aſſuring them that he would be a ſpeake man for them, not douting but to preuaile in a matter ſo honeſt and reaſonable, heerevpon the poore men returned backe with goodman Harryſon, who with words like his heart honeſt and ſincere, once againe perſwaded his neighbours to graunt this petition to the poore men, but all was in vaine, for they being many and he but one they violent and he meeke, ſo ouer-ruled the matter that the poore mens ſuite was vtterly denayd, and all ſhaddow of hope ſo cleane taken away, that the poore men reſolued neuer more to thinke on the motion.

Now when Harryſon ſaw the cruelty of his neighbours and how blindly their couetouſneſſe led them into all hardneſſe of heart, and contempt of Gods commandements, he he called all the poore men to him in the preſents of the rich, and there told them that he was a ſubiect and a freeman, and one on whom GOD had beſtowed bleſſings aboue his merrit: that he had there amongſt them free hould land, ſuch as neither their cuſtomes nor cruelties could tye to any of their obſeruations, and therefore in the name of GOD he willed all the poore men to goe into the field and bouldlie vpon his lands to gather peaſe at their owne pleaſures, and withall perſwading them by no meanes to offend their neighbours, or to doe them any treſpaſſe, but as for his owne lands to make no ſpare, for if it doe ſatiſfie their wants it payd him the full rent he required.

The poore men praiſed GOD for his goodneſſe and heartily prayed that all plenty of fare might be doubly doubled vpon him, and ſo they departed into the fields to gather peaſe on good man Harryſons lands, for the reliefe

of them and their poore families, whilst the rich men biting their lips and smyling in contempt, gaue his honest almes deed the title of pride and ostentation.

When the poore men had gathered pease sufficient for their releife, they saw the Euening to draw on with a more thicke and blacke countenance, then vsually it was accustomed so that presaged some storme to come, on they hastned to take vp their loads, and altogether with one heart and voyce praysing GOD, and praying for their benefactor they departed homewards, but scarcely were they entred into their houses, when sodainly the Heauens grew black, and night many houers before her true time, became mystris and couered all that Hemysphcare, when instantly great cracks of Thunder brake from the skies, and strange lightnings flashed vp and downe in such vyolent manner, that peoples hearts were astonyshed and great feare entred amongst them; after this thunder and lightning fell such a storme of hayle and raine, that the like hath not béene read nor heard of since the daies of the Israelites, for the hayle-stones were generally full nine inches square, but particularly of a much bigger compasse, neither fell the raine in drops but streames one ouertaking another so hastily as if it had béene out of a spout or conduit, and this raine and hayle myring their vyolences together so beate downe all manner of corne graine and pulse to the ground, and so razor-like cut of the cods and heads of the corne, that not in all those spacious fields belonging to that wretched towne of Humerston, being hundreds of ackers in compasse was not to be found a stalke that had either eare or cod vpon it, onely the corne of this vertuous man good man Harrisons excepted, which albe it lay scatered by single lands, two lands and thrée lands, here and there amongst his neighbours, yet receiued he not one penyworth of damage, neither had he one stalke bruised nor one eare or cod blasted, so great were the mercies of GOD, and so preuaylable the cryes and prayers of the poore people.

Yet I cannot any way coniecture or assuredly say, That this Iudgement of God was purposedly sent among them only for their hard dealings or miserable affeition to the poore at that time (as who should say the like vengeance shall come vppon others that shall doe the like. But for that let euery man regard his own safety and know by what I haue said before, that all men ought to call to minde, how God by that gentle warning threatneth further vengeance, vnles repentance be sought for. There is no respect of persons before God, but all alike. And no question, but although some be hard hearted, others are as pitifull: some not so vngratefull, but others as gracious, not so vile, but others as well minded and no doubt but though these miserable men might be so hard of pitty, but that now they repent their hardnesse, and doe assuredly thinke that the giuer of all is farre more powerfull then he that hath nothing but what commeth from him. And I pray God that all men may duely consider of the same, and not onely vnder a shew of comiseration offer a deuotion, or almes where no need is, to be giuen as who should say, for my credit I must releiue my friends. But with a pure and Godly heart say: you haue néede I will releiue you, you are poore GOD hath sent you. What I giue is for my Masters sake the giuer of all.

And this relation was faithfully, and truely iustified at the last quarter Sessions, held at Louth in the county of Lincolne the tenth day of July last past 1616. by diuers honest and credible persons in the open face of the whole court and all the Knights and gentelmen then sitting vpon the bench, and therefore it is fit for euery deuout soule to thinke vpon these things, and with all earnestnesse of heart to flie from couetousnesse, for thou shalt beare nothing of thy goods to iudgement with thée, but that which thou hast giuen to the poore. O deny not to the poore the perishing and fraile goods for whom Christ hath not refused to giue his life, giue to the poore that thou maist giue to thy selfe, for whatsoeuer thou hast not bestowed vpon the poore

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another shall enioy, and thou shalt confesse that he is too couetous to whom the Lord is not a sufficient portion, he doth not yet truely hope for heauenly things, which doth more esteeme earthly things, how would he giue his brother his life that denies him bread, the hand of the poore is the treasure of heauen, that which it takes it puts in heauen, least it perish in the earth, wilt thou performe one acceptable duty to Christ, then exhibit a benefit to the poore, for the good which is done to the members the head takes as done to it selfe, Christ saith, Giue me of that which I haue giuen thee of mine owne, doe good of thy good that thou maist get thée good, giue earthly things that thou maist get thée them, because thou shalt lose them by keeping them too sparingly, here Christs admonition least thou perish by his iudgement, when he shall say, Goe you cursed into euerlasting fire, because you haue not fed mee when I was an hungred, Forget not that almes deeds are a most holy seed; as it is scattred sparingly or bountifully, the harueſt wilbe either poore or plentifull, if thou wilt be in the number of the sheepe doe some good also to the sheepe, let the Goates which are placed on the left hand affright thée, not because they haue taken away, but because they haue not giuen, so shall the Lord incline thy heart to his testimonies and not to couetousnesse.

FINIS.

The Vnfortunate Father.

Or fearefull iudgement by God ſhewed vpon *a curſing and blaſpheming Farmer named Iohn Cormiſh*, not far from *Strow* in *Stafford*-ſhire; where he and his whole Houſhould in one day came to vntimely ending: being done the 9. of May laſt 1616. The ſame day *Miſtris Vincent* killed her Children at *Acton* neere *London*: the like for ſtrangenes before this time neuer happened in England.

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YE glorious and moſt beawtifull Maieſtie of God, hauing ſo long and with ſo great fauour vouchſafed to caſt downe his heauenly eyes vpon vs of this Land, and that in ſuch meaſure that no nation vnder the Cope of Heauen can ſay, that they euer had ſuch aboundance of the bleſsings w̄ we haue and daylie doe receiue in the preſeruing vs from Plague, Sword, Dearth and Famine. And many other vnſpeakeable kindneſſes: we thinke ſhould moue all men to caſt off all their ſinnes and wickednelſe, and with bending knees and proſtrate bodies to pray heartily for repentance and amendment of life, and to call

to God for grace to auoid all thinges hurtfull vnfitting and abhominable in the sight of God as Treasons, theftes, wilfull murthers, desparations of heart, and wilfull destroying the swéet breath which the Lord hath so graciously breathed into the body of man at his first Creation.

O how swéet and comfortable a thing were it for the mind of man to consider in what state the soule standeth, when so much as any euill or bloody thought shall but goe about to circumuent the hart, or besiege the godly or inward thoughts of man, with contrarieties & differences to humaine nature. Consider but of the Orators words in the 3. book of his Offices: wherein he doth vtterly condemne the bloody thought of man for murther or blood shedding as the most abhorred and detestable thing in the world to bee deuised in diuers similitudes, as thus. [a] Vt membra quædam Corporis hominis amputantur si et ipsa sanguine et tanquam spiritu carere cæperunt: sic ista feritas corporis & immunitas belluæ a communi hominum societate segreganda est. Euen as certaine members of the body of man are cut or taken off, if they once lacke blood or spirit within them (whereby they cannot bee vsed to the helpe of man) Euen so this kind of cruelty & beastly inhumanity is to be segregated and deuided from the familiarity, society or thought of all men.

May the most holy and sacred word and commaundement of our most gracious and louing GOD in the tenth Chapter of Exodus commandeth vs saying, Thou shalt not kill, Thou doe no murther, neither vpon thine owne person nor the body of any other: Reprehending also Caine for the murther of his brother Abell, what heauy sentance did the Lord pronounce against him for his reward, A Vagabond shalt thou bee all the dayes of thy life.

How then shall the Arrogancie of man: the cruell thought of man, Or the audatious heart of man presumes so farre as to moue so wonderfull, powerfull and gracious a God in the prosering to shed that blood which his deare Sonne

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our Lord and Sauiour Iesus Christ hath so dearely bought, shedding his own blood for the enlargement and redemption of our soules from Sathan our mortall enemy. What and how many strange and most terrible accidents haue lately hapned through the want of calling to God for grace, yet how little forbearance to persist in the like and worse, if worse may be, dayly and hourely as now I am to relate to you: which with a bleeding heart must come from mee, for it most abhominable in Gods sight and most terrible for the eares of man to heare.

Not farre from Strowe in Stafford-shire dwelt a Farmer of good meanes and estate, named Iohn Cormish, one whom the Lord had blest with plenty and aboundance: Yet the Diuell (through his want of grace, beeing the mortall enemy to man) so crept into him, that hee inclyned himselfe to nothing so much as cursling, swearing and such like, robbing God of his honour.

For when it should please God to crosse him in any thing and that all went not as hee would haue and command it: his disposition was most abhominably to blaspheme, to sweare and to murmure at the power of God, banning and fearefully curssing his wife and children.

He had one childe, a pretty youth of twelue yeares of age, whom he had on a day forth with him to plough. And as it should seeme something happened crosse, whether by fault of the horses, or fault in their tacklings or that the Child did displease him in the driuing: it is vncertaine but hee beeing moued, without any more adoe suddenly fell to swearing and cursing of the child, and withall in a fury and madnesse tooke vp a heauy clod, and let drive at the child in such manner and with such force and fury that he hat the Child vnder the eare, where with he presently fell downe and dyed.

O vnfortunate man! O vnhappy tongue, to curse and moue the displeasure of God so deepely by such vnhappy craning the confusion and seeing it of thine owne flesh and blood before thine owne face.

Troubled in mind with the vnfortunate chance hee had, hee standing yet amazed and not knowing what to doe, the Childs body growing cold he toke the same and in a furrow buried it couering the same ouer with earth and mould of the field where this vnhappy chance fell out. Immagine but the terrible feare and trembling of his wofull heart: and immagine but the torments of his soule how great they were.

Heauy in heart (this terrible deed being done. He wandered sadly homewards, along with his teame, wishing he had neuer béene borne, to sée how iustly his wishes should hit vpon that poore and innocent childe, and not daring to reueale this hard mischance to his Wife: (not yet calling to GOD for grace) fell into desperation, and to finish his further woes, after he had set vp his teame safe in the stable, all voyde of grace most wilfully hangd himselfe in his barne vpon a beame.

His carefull wife not fearing or misdoubting any manner of matter touching any such misfortune. Thinking he had béene busie among his Cattle went about to prouide his dinner against he had done. And in the end musing why he should stay so long aboue his wonted vse she went forth calling him but he would not speake, wherefore she went into the Barne and there with a wofull and heauy heart, she beheld this vnfortunate spectacle.

Wofully lamenting to her selfe these sad chances she was perplexed, yet GOD wot nothing could comfort her, for euery where the very thoughts of her heart were so moued that she was frantick in a manner, and full of cares, came into the house fearefully lamenting, where to encrease her further sorrow she beheld the third part of her vnhappy fortune. The sucking infant which she had set downe carelesly vpon a table fell downe, and beat out the braines of it vpon the ground, being taken but a little before from sucking at her breast.

Terrible is this to be thought vpon: let all men iudge in what case this carefull creature might walke, troubled

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she must be in minde of necessity: and so she was no doubt: yet voyde of grace as well as all the rest, she neuer left of, musing and wandring with a thousand troubled thoughts. yet all this while not knowing what became of her eldest sonne, nor minded she any thing, sauing onely to finish and make vp the rest of this most wofull and lamentable tragedie, without grace or feare of GOD she most desperatlie went and into a pond threw her selfe headlong, and drowned her selfe.

This was the most lamentable end, of the cursing and blaspheming Father his wofull and accursed Wife, and both his poore distressed Children. The elder Childes body was afterwards found out by a shepards boy, who by meanes of his dog being in the field, found out this dead and murthered carcase, who reuealing the same to some of the neighbors, the dead corps of them all was caried to the towne, where many wofull eyes with terrible and amazed hearts beheld, the fearfull and most heauy iudgement of GOD, so inflicted iustly vpon the whole houshold of that accused and wofull man. Where all men that beheld it as time it was, with repentant and sorrowfull hearts, desired GOD of his mercy to graunt them all grace, to forbeare to attempt the wrath of the Lord by cursings, and such most damnable bannings and vnhappy wishes.

This heauy and most bloudy tragedy was attempted begunne and performed the very vnfortunate and vnhappy day that Mistris Vincent of Acton in the County of Middelsexe most vnhappily by the instigation and procurement of the diuell, did most wilfully and vnnaturally slay two infants her owne children, for which she suffered death, in the heauy sight of many thousands of people.

Let all men with spéed take warning at this time by this most strange yet to trew mischance: so hapned vpon these wofull wights. That the Lord may grant vs all so speciall grace to call to him to repentance, that not so much as one thought may be intertained into our hearts, either to take

his moſt holy and bleſſed name in vaine; or vainely to curſe or ban one another, in that horrible kind, finding aſſuredly that GOD is iuſt in his dealings, and will heare the bitter wiſh of a blaſphemer, to his vtter downefall and euerlaſting damnation, Repent in time prouoke not GOD to vengeance. It is horred and deteſtible in the eares of men, farre more odious in the ſight of GOD. Wherefore knowing the Lord doth hate it, why ſhould we practize or loue it, if GOD diſallow it, how can we allow it. Euery man take gentle warning: ſhun deſperation by continuall prayer to GOD, who of his mercy will heare the prayer of ſuch as call vpon him, GOD for thy mercy guid vs with thy aſpeciall grace, protect vs all with thy mercy, and giue vs grace for euer to beare in minde, how good and gracious thou haſt béene to thy ſinfull people.

Bleſſed God increaſe thy loue to vs all: to the end of our liues.

FINIS.

T. Best

Kentucky